

Aesthetics Of Language: A Stylistic Analysis Of Ike's Toads For Supper

Mohammad Muazzam Sharif¹ , Mujahid Shah² , Syed Attia Bibi³

¹Lecturer, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan.

²Assistant Professor, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan.

³Visiting Lecturer, Department of English, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan.

ABSTRACT:

This study is a linguistic stylistic analysis of Chukwuemeka Ike's novel Toads for Supper. The study specifically focuses to stylistically analyze the diction and paragraph structure of the selected novel. This research concludes how Ike has used words and construction of paragraph to reveal the themes and concepts that are prevailing in Nigerian society and culture. Moreover, this research study also explores how stylistic construction of the novel combined to produce the aesthetics of the novel under study.

KEYWORDS: Stylistics, Aesthetics, diction, linguistics stylistics

INTRODUCTION

Stylistics has always been regarded as an interdisciplinary and relatively a modern concept, but it has its origins in the traditional rhetoric. In fact its history can be traced back to the art of rhetoric obtained from the ancient Greek and Latin rhetoric, which were taught in 5th century BC. These rhetoric styles, used by the ancient Greeks and Latin, were revived by the Renaissance writers and poets and turned into more elaborated forms which are now known as stylistics.

In the 19th century when linguistics emerged as a scientific study of language, any discussion on the style of language was considered as a discussion of linguistics. The reason for this was because linguists believe that any piece of literature, any style of literature is a result of language usage. This thought and approach give birth to modern stylistics.

The focus of linguistics stylistics is particularly on the scientific rules of the language in its analysis i.e. it focus heavily on the grammatical, lexical, cohesion, language structure and on the

figures of speech. Literary stylistics, on the other hand, relies on abstracts such as; history, philosophy, and subject matter etc.

Chukwuemeka Ike's novels are rich with artistic styles and aesthetics. This research paper uses Ike's novel *Toads for Supper* as its primary text. The selected text is analyzed for its stylistic richness. The researcher focus to analyze linguistics feature like diction, structure and stylistics features.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chukwuemeka Ike (28 April 1931 – 9 January 2020) was a modern Nigerian writer. He is best known for his social satire and sarcasm. He belonged to the royal family of Ndikelionwu in Eastern Nigeria. His father was a king a civic leader. Ike was greatly inspired from the work of Chinua Achebe, and he also served as a focal member in Chinua Achebe's magazine club.

Ike started his career as a primary school teacher. After the Nigerian Civil War, he was appointed Chairman, Planning and Management Committee of the University. He was responsible for reopening and managing the institution as the interim Chief Executive immediately after the war.

THE SELECTED TEXT: TOADS FOR SUPPER

Toads for Supper is Chukwuemeka Ike's first novel, published in 1965. The story is set in a fictitious Nigerian university and the story revolves around the lives of few undergraduate students from the same university. The two main characters of the novel are Miss Aduke (an undergraduate student) and Mr. Amadi (A freshman History student). The other characters, which play an important role in the novel, are Chima and Sweetie. Chima, like Amadi, is also a History student, while Sweetie is a street girl who is not much educated.

The novel deals with the themes of love, inherent problems a couple from different ethnic backgrounds face, the aims and ambitions of university students, generation gap and space for diversity.

SYNOPSIS OF THE NOVEL

Amadi is an ambitious student. He is quite genius at his studies, and he has a dream to win the heart of a girl on his own. However, the tragedy in his life is that he's already engaged to a beautiful girl of his tribe since he was a child. Amadi believe that these engagements done in childhood are an old-fashioned tradition, which he does not approve and he wants to marry a girl of his own choice.

Amadi falls in love with Aduke (who belongs to another tribe) and wants to win her hand in marriage. His friend, Chima, is of opinion that love outside one's tribe is useless, because in Nigeria it is impossible to marry a girl from another tribe.

As the story progress, the relationship between Amadi and Aduke deepens and he is making a lot of plans to marry her. However, Chima suggest Amadi that since he is already bound to a girl

of his tribe, he should shun the idea of marrying Aduke and just enjoy “an occasional fling”. It is one such “occasional fling”, which brings Sweetie in the story.

Amadi develops a physical relationship with Sweetie which results in impregnation of Sweetie. When his illicit relationship with Sweetie is exposed, he faces a lot of consequences; his relationship with his parents gets disturbed, Aduke leaves him, and he is rusticated from the university.

When his rustication period is ended, Amadi comes back to university and once again began to approach Aduke. A letter from Sweetie also convinces Aduke that the child is not of Amadi but someone else. So, Amadi and Aduke decide to marry. Meanwhile Amadi’s fathers fell ill and Amadi is summoned at home. Amadi’s father dies and he is informed that he has to marry Nwakaego (his childhood fiancée). He writes a letter to Aduke about this and because of this new Aduke literally gets mad and she is taken to a mental hospital.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

African literature is such a rich and creative literature. Some renowned African writers have received a lot of appreciation in the world of literature. However, Chukwuemeka Ike, despite his wonderful work, has not been given due attention. Though there has been some academic research on his novels, yet none of his work was studied from stylistic perspective. Ike’s language is so beautiful, complex and so rich and moving. Therefore, a linguistic stylistic study of Ike’s novel will explore the artistic and aesthetic worth of his literature.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the artistic and aesthetic worth of Chukwuemeka Ike’s novel
- To expose the effect of language in delivering the message in the novel

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research tries to answer the following questions in the light of selected novel, *Toads for Supper*.

- i. How the language of the novel does create an aesthetic effect?
- ii. How the language used in the novel contributes to make the meaning?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Toads for Supper is one of the most successful novels by Chukwuemeka Ike. The novel perfectly represents the true culture of tribal Nigeria. Ike’s work brings to readers true colors of African culture and societies. Moreover, he has used a beautiful, rich and animated language and style to convey his messages and themes. This linguistic stylistic study of his novel will expose the beauty and literary worth of his works. Further this research will also act as a reference point for students who are interested in researching in linguistic stylistics.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Linguistics stylistic analysis focus on the lexicons, grammatical patterns, linguistics devices used by the author, figures of speech, cohesion, context and the sentence and paragraph structures. However, keeping in mind the level of research this study is delimited to analyze the diction and paragraph structures of the selected text. Moreover, the researchers do not analyze each and every paragraph given in the text, but only the structure of selected paragraphs is analyzed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the paper presents a review of relevant literature. It includes literature dealing with the emergence and application of linguistic stylistics and also literature dealing with Chukwuemeka Ike's works in general and his novel *Toads for Supper* in particular. This section also tries to identify the unanswered questions or gaps.

STYLE VS. STYLISTICS

Simply put style is the manner of thinking something, saying something or writing something. Style can also be defined as a method of doing something. When we talk about the style of writer, we actually mean the manner in which he/she expresses something. And the writers choose a style according to the genre, theme as well as according to the audience. According to C.H. Holman (1980):

Style is the arrangement of words in a manner which at once best expresses the individuality of the author and the idea and the intent in the author's mind. (p. 432)

Stylistics, on other hand, is the linguistics and scientific study of style. According to Bradford (1997), stylistics analysis is the exploration of distinctive features of language used by a writer and the effect it produces. According to this elaboration provided by Bradford (1997), stylistic analysis involves analyzing a range of linguistic characteristics i.e. grammar, sentence patterns, diction, repetitions, imagery and arrangement of thoughts.

ANCIENT RHETORIC: A HISTORY OF STYLISTICS

The use of language for creating a particular speech that serves a particular function – judiciary, politics, literature, motivational speech etc. – is referred as rhetoric. In ancient Greece, rhetoric was taught as an important subject to pupils. Since societies at those times had no culture of writing, they used to give a lot of value to the speech creation. Various skills were involved in the production of a fine, good speech. The oratorical devices used in the art of public speaking included; proverbial expressions, pictorial words, rhymes, emotive words and repetitions etc. These devices were later termed as figures of speech. This connection between stylistics and ancient rhetoric is confirmed by Graham Hough (1969) when he says:

The modern study of style, i.e. stylistics, has its roots in classical rhetoric: the ancient art of persuasive speech, which has always had a close affinity with literature. (pp. 2)

Along with the art of public speaking, these figures of speeches also found its way in poetry and prose. These rhetoric devices and expressive language was renewed and revived once again by a number of writers during the European Renaissance period and the centuries that followed. This fact is attested by Bradford (1997), who writes:

It [the figurative language] reemerged in the writing of St. Augustine and in Peter Ramus's *Dialectique* (1555), one of the founding moments in the revival of classical rhetoric during the European Renaissance. (p. 5)

From the above lines we can see that rhetoric as a formal field of study developed in Europe during renaissance period. In the years to come various linguists also began to differentiate between literary and non-literary texts and languages. And by the second half of the 20th century various fields of studies gained independence, a lot of new fields of studies were emerged. Modern stylistics was one of them.

MODERN STYLISTICS

Modern stylistics, as can be concluded from the above discussion, evolved from ancient rhetoric. One of the distinctive features of modern stylistics is that, it focuses on the relationship of form and content. And according to Koch (1963) the modern stylistics builds "the connection between aesthetic responses and specific stimuli in a text" (p. 28).

Modern stylistics basically emphasize on how certain meanings are produced. It doesn't bother with what a literary text is about. Rather, it focuses on how words and structures organize together to form a message or a meaning.

Modern stylistics was developed by Roger Flower (1971) and M.A.K. Halliday (1961). Flower and Halliday actually looked at the social, contextual and linguistic association in a written text. These modern approaches and concepts emerged in stylistics in 1960-70s. New tools and techniques and strategies developed by a lot of theorists and academicians came forward to change the trend stylistic analysis would work.

Earlier, stylistic studies would focus on both the literary element as well as on linguistic elements. And stylistic was regarded as a discipline that is on the border line between literature and linguistics i.e. a field of study that bridges the gap between literature and linguistic studies. Modern stylistics, on the contrary to traditional stylistics, created a distinction between literary stylistics and linguistic stylistics.

LINGUISTIC AND LITERARY STYLISTICS

When it comes to stylistic analysis, a lot of scholars believe that we need to distinguish between linguistic and non-linguistic contexts. Linguistic context means when the focus is on analyzing linguistic features i.e. when we focus of the language and its structure. Non-linguistic contexts include literary elements and patterns.

As discussed earlier stylistics is the scientific study of style, so linguistics stylistics, according to K. Wales (1991) involves analysis of a range of language qualities including

grammar, sounds, nouns, verbs, adjectives, syntax, paragraph structure and organization, coherence and cohesion etc. linguistics stylistics, actually, focus on the formal structure of the language of the given text. This is validated by Azuike (1992), who claimed that:

Linguistic stylistics is objective in nature because it is intra-textual and is based on the content of the text under analysis. (p. 132)

On the other hand we have literary stylistics. Literary stylistics is more complex than linguistic stylistics. Literary stylistics is more like literary criticism, which focus on the interpretive skills of the researcher. It focuses on the abstracts like, themes, deeper meanings, of the text. Literary stylistics, instead of linguistic elements, rely on literary elements, like symbolism, foreshadowing, foregrounding, allusion, background, settings etc.

This research uses linguistic stylistic analysis to analyze the text of Ike's debut novel *Toads for Supper*. The current study is limited to analyze the diction and paragraph structure of selected paragraphs of the novel. The goal of the stylistic analysis of the selected novel is not just limited to the analysis of the language only, but this paper highlights how the style of language in a text draws meaning and interpretation i.e. to show the functional significance of language in making the meanings.

LITERATURE ABOUT CHUKWUEMEKA IKE'S WORKS

Chukwuemeka Ike is a prolific Nigerian writer. He has published 17 books in total which includes 11 fiction and 6 non-fiction books. Despite his wonderful publications, he has rarely been discussed by the researchers or academicians. Thus, there is very limited literature available on his works, except some book reviews, explanatory essays and some academic research done by students mostly from his native land Nigeria.

Ugbabe (2001) conducted a study to explore the representation of Nigerian culture in Ike's selected short stories. According to Ugbabe (2001), Ike's successfully represented the tribal community of Nigeria with all the minute details.

Igboanusi (2002) analyzed Igbo English used in Ike's novels. According to his research Ike's use of Igbo English is quite complex yet very artistic. And his language choice successfully conveys his message in each of his novel. Igboanusi (2002), also appreciated the lexical innovation of Ike's language.

Despite of Ike's literary excellence, not much is heard of this literary giant in the world of research in literature. Macpherson Azuike (1992) worked on Ike's *Bottled Leopard* and highlighted some of the most important themes of the novel. The also threw light of the presence of the elements of magical realism in the novel.

Another work on Ike's novel was conducted by Victor Aire (2006). Aire analyzed Ike's novel *Sunset at Dawn*. *Sunset at Dawn* deals with Nigerian civil war. Aire has done a socio-historical analysis of the novel and has discussed the impact of wars on societies and families.

Besides few academic works, there are some book reviews available on Ike's works. Some general essays can also be found on internet and personal blogs.

Ike's first novel i.e. *Toads for Supper*, received a lot of praise and appreciation. It is considered as a masterpiece of Ike. However; no significant research work is being done on it. Therefore, this research attempts to do linguistic stylistic analysis of *Toads for Supper*. The researchers aim to bring forth the literary and linguistic value of Ike's novel through the said analysis.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is purely qualitative in nature. It is not a cultural study, a thematic analysis or a case study. This study uses linguistic stylistic as its method to analyze the diction and paragraph structure of the selected novel.

Also the researchers do not aim to use literary stylistics but pure linguistic stylistics only. The methodological framework for this research is, therefore, structural i.e. analyzing the structure of a particular language (sounds, words, meanings, etc).

The primary text selected for this study is Chukwuemeka Ike's novel *Toads for Supper* (1965). For secondary recourses, the researchers have taken help from different articles, books, research papers and internet resources all of which are mentioned in the reference list.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the research presents a detailed analysis and critique on the novel of Chukwuemeka Ike, *Toads for Supper*. This section by analyzing the diction and paragraph structure, also answers the research questions designed for the study and try to fill the gap identified in the review section of this paper.

THE USE OF DICTION IN TOADS FOR SUPPER

The novel is set in a Nigerian and the story revolves around typical undergraduate students. So, one can see a lot of code switching and Yoruba or Ibo (the two languages spoken in the south of Nigeria) and Pidgin English. Along with code switching one can also see that the characters frequently switch from English to slang when they are talking to their friends and peers.

While talking about Aduke, Chima uses the word "Akwasá" (p. 9). It is an Ibo slang which simple is used for feminine appreciation and praise. Chima, then, switch the code and says:

'O!': 'Bo, dat one catch O!', (*Toads for Supper*, p. 9)

This means that 'someone is attractive and charming', especially the females. In the above sentence; one can also feel the phonological impact of Ibo language on Chima's speech. Now one can say that how by looking at a pretty girl, he automatically switched the codes. This shows us that an air of excitement runs through him when he saw an attractive girl. On another occasion when Chima comes to know that Aduke is from a different tribe he talks to Amadi and tries to convince him that the marriage of these two is not possible. Thus, he says:

Let me cut the matter neatly like a scarf. That girl is Yoruba [name of the tribe], you are Ibo [name of another tribe in Nigeria]. The twain cannot meet. (Toads for Supper, p. 11)

Twain means two. Chima used this word instead of simple saying 'two', because he wanted to emphasize that how rigid and strict their tribal rules are. This word also reflects his sense of belonging i.e. that he proudly belongs to the Ibo tribe. We see that with this change in the language of expression, how artistically and stylistically Ike has introduced the theme of tribalism in the novel.

Since all these main characters of the novel are undergraduate students in a Nigerian, the readers will see a lot of shift from the standard English slangs to Nigerian slangs. And most of these slangs, especially those used by the boys, are vulgar and have a sense of double meaning. On one of the occasions in the novel, when Amadi talks about his obsession with Aduke, Chima tells Amadi the following words:

You're engaged to a beautiful girl at home. You have no need for a serious friend here; all you need is perhaps an occasional fling. (pp. 10-11)

The phrase 'occasional fling' here means a casual and non-serious relationship with a girl for the sake of pleasure and time pass. Further Chima also tells him about a:

Special part of the University town where occasional flings were readily available for a few shillings. The older women, worn out by the rigors of their profession, would accept even a shilling for 'one trip'. (Toads for Supper, p. 12)

Here 'special part of university town' mean brothels, red-light streets. Now the meaning of 'occasional fling' becomes clearer here; it means occasional sexual intercourse.

The university cafeteria is one such place in the novel where most of the students gather to discuss politics and student union's discussions. So one of the expressions that is commonly used by boys in the cafeteria is:

Lend me your knives and forks. (Toads for Supper, p. 23)

This sentence is used as slang for an English expression that requests for attention of people to keep quiet for a while. It is in the same cafeteria, where Chima while talking to Amadi about the election campaign says:

Campaign my Yash..!! (Toads for Supper, p. 26)

'yash' is again a slang word used for 'arse'. So, Chima simple means that these kind of campaigns are useless and has no worth. Here, Ike once again by blending English and Ibo slangs from the mouth of Nigerian university students actually comments of the political situation of the country. It also shows us what the Nigerian youth thinks about its country politics.

Also we see that the in the cafeteria when boys talk about the girls they'd refer to them as "dames" (p. 29) and "organic bus" (p. 30), and would call themselves the "drivers" (p. 30). And the any boy who fails to impress a girl is regarded as "backboneless" (p. 31).

Through these English and Ibo slangs used by students of a Nigerian university, Ike shows us the cultural side of Nigeria and its youth. Moreover, these words create a charming effect in the novel and one really gets to see the Nigerian culture and society through these words.

One can witness that how skillfully and stylistically Ike has presented these offensive expressions by using slangs that it doesn't seem too vulgar. For instance at another point Sweetie says about Amadi that:

He (Amadi) would try to use me. (Toads for Supper, p. 109)

By the above statement Sweetie, actually, means that Amadi wants to have sexual intercourse with her. Similarly, on another occasion Chima informs Amadi about Sweetie's pregnancy in the following words:

She (Sweetie) missed her time. (Toads for Supper, p. 131)

Means that Sweetie has missed her periods which mean she is pregnant. Ike in his novel has used different slangs and terms which is a representation of all classes of people in Nigeria. Moreover, the use of such terms and vulgar language is also common among university students. So, Ike remains true in creating his characters and has also accurately showed the type on language they use.

Ike in Toads for Supper, not only represented the language of educated youth of Nigerian university but he also portrayed the common, uneducated class of Nigerian who cannot speak the standard English. This portrayal can be seen in the language of minor characters like street girls, peons and porters in the university and common tribal men.

An encounter of these less educated or uneducated people can be seen when Amadi is dancing with a girls in the bar and he asks her if she's enjoying or not. The girl replies "small, small" (p. 29). It means that she was enjoying little. When Amadi is leaving she says:

You no go, buy me somethin' make I drink?' (Toads for Supper, p. 30)

This means: you can't go. Buy me something, make me a drink. In the same scene after sometime Amadi is dancing with another girl. When Amadi and the girl are leaving, she suddenly stops and says:

I want to took some beer first. (Toads for Supper, p. 30)

By these expressions Ike shows us how the common, less educated or some uneducated local people have nativised English language. By using language in such a stylistic way, Ike wants to

depict the Nigerian society and their interaction with English language. Secondly such use of language also creates humor.

Similarly, another example of this can be seen when one morning a porter comes to Amadi and tells him that a girl came to meet him but he was not around she left. Amadi gets angry and ask him why she left without meeting him and why he didn't inform him on time.

'e don go, Sir. Somebody say you no dey for Hall'.
'Nonsense,' Amadi retorted, 'Who said I was not in when I have been in all morning?'
'Na one student, Sir. 'e say 'e see de time you de go away from Hall by ten o'clock'. (Toads for Supper, p. 135)

Through these expressions Ike portrays the language and diction of less educated class of Nigerian society. We can see that the language of each dialogue is chosen wisely by Ike to uncover the different people of Nigerian society. Moreover, we can also see the cultural aspect of these people from their language. The author's word selection is quite logical and intentional. And the themes can be analyzed from the analysis of the language used.

PARAGRAPHS STRUCTURE IN TOADS FOR SUPPER

In Chukwemeka Ike's *Toads for Supper* most of the paragraphs are in the form of interior monologue. He uses the monologues extensively not only to flesh out his paragraphs but also stylistically to unveil the thought processes of the characters. Also through these interior monologues the writer actually presents the stream of consciousness of the novel. There are no less than thirty paragraphs of various types of monologue in the novel. However, the researcher doesn't analyze all the paragraphs but only the selected ones.

In most of his interior monologues, Ike presented the confusion and agitation in the mind of the characters. For example, when the porter comes to Amadi and tells him that he has a visitor, Amadi has no idea who the visitor is and he gets agitated. The following thoughts and question comes to his mind about the visitor:

I do not owe anybody anything. But who could this mysterious visitor be? Could it be Sweetie? I hope not! In any case what could she be doing in my room? She could not have recovered sufficiently from her recent delivery to be setting another trap for me. And even if she has, she would have to be more foolish than a sheep to think that I would fall into her clutches again.' (Toads for Supper, p. 174)

By using these questions and interior monologue Ike tries to fill the suspense as well as to x-ray the state of Amadi's thoughts before meeting with the visitor. The pattern of these questions has something in common with classical rhetorical questions in that both are useful emotive devices used to suggest a character's outburst of natural feelings.

This above paragraph is immediately followed by another interior monologue. However, this next monologue is in the 3rd person narration, which means that this monologue is not coming from Amadi but directly from the author.

Sweetie would be too ashamed of herself to show up on the University campus so soon. Who then could it be? It could not be the Hausa hawker who had promised to bring him a set of ivory beads and earrings, in exchange for his old tweed jacket and two pairs of trousers. The set was intended as a surprise present for Aduke. There would have been no need for the Hausa man to wait, since he came to the campus almost every day. (Toads for Supper, p. 174)

Now in this paragraph which is the interior monologue of the author, the author actually goes in the mind of the readers and ignites their curiosity about the visitor. Similarly, at one point in the novel Amadi receive a rumor that his fiancée is going to be engaged to another person, since he doesn't want to marry her. When he thinks that his fiancée, whose name is Nwakaego, is going to be married to someone else, he once again becomes so much confused and thinks that:

Nwakaego was beautiful, naturally beautiful, without the help of make-up. She was innocent, the kind of girl who went to her husband's house intact. She had been brought up in a home where the wife accepted the authority of her husband and the husband knew the woman's role. She came from his village; spoke not only the same language but also the same dialect as he spoke. She was acceptable to his parents who had longed to call her their daughter-in-law. Yet he had been reluctant to marry her. Why? Because she was not sufficiently educated? ... Aduke had dazzled him so much that he had become blind to Nwakaego's good points. What an idiot he had been! And what a price he was paying for his blindness, his stupidity! (Toads for Supper, p. 148).

After a few paragraphs we see that there is another interior monologue which says:

You can't back out now. Remember you have all the time given your support. However long you may wait, Nwakaego will turn out to be what you make of her. Give her a fair chance. Show that you appreciate her problems. Don't compare her with Aduke... (Toads for Supper, p. 179).

These two paragraphs are stylistically very significant. The one paragraph very beautifully describes the confused situation in mind of Amadi. The second paragraph, however, comes from his inner conscience and is trying to clear his doubts about Nwakaego.

When Amadi's father come to know about his relationship with Aduke and Sweetie and that he's rusticated from the university he becomes too much angry and upset. He is filled with disappointment and hatred for his own son. He feels disgusted in front of the whole village, because everyone in the village gossips about Amadi's relationship with Sweetie. Ike expresses Amadi father's feelings in the following words:

He had dragged him in the mud and given the village gossips something to talk about. How could he stand before his people another day to decry immorality unless he made an example of his son? How could he in one breath invoke the wrath of God on prostitutes and other dangerous township women, and in another welcome one of them to his house as a daughter-in-law? How could he encourage his son to disclaim his child? ...

No, he needed no oracle to point out the way. Amadi must accept full responsibility for his indiscretion. He must marry the girl, but he must not bring her to his house... (Toads for Supper, pp. 125-126).

These two paragraphs beautifully express the agony of a father at his son's stupidity and recklessness. Creating a monologue at these critical points, Ike wants the readers to probe inside the mind of the characters and know how and what they feel.

These feelings of the father, which are described in the above lines, highlight the theme of father-son relationship. It also throws light on Nigerian culture and life style. We can see from the construction and diction of the paragraph that the father is concerned about his son behavior. Thus, these stylistic constructions are once again successful in adding to the aesthetics of the story.

These are just few examples. Throughout the novel we can see examples of such rich and brilliant paragraphs, especially the use of interior monologue which is quite frequent in this novel. The use of interior monologue is a 20th century development and Ike uses this technique stylistically in projecting and propelling events in the paragraphs.

Ike's use of language and the style of presenting interior monologues in the form of paragraphs is very dynamic and rendering a lot of strength and richness and colors to the novel, thus, ensuring the dramatic movement of his story in an aesthetic way.

CONCLUSION

Style in a language means using language in such a way that it expresses the thoughts and ideas in best possible way. Style or stylistics of any writing can reveal so many things about the text i.e. the themes, the mood, the tone, the artistic or scientific impression and so on. This study focuses on the stylistic features of the selected novel. The researcher analyzes the novel qualitatively using linguistic stylistic analysis. The stylistic analysis of Ike's novel Toads for Supper revealed the artistic effect created by the language. The author used simple clear language to highlight some of the most important and prominent culture and traditions of Nigerian society. It is through language that we see how the Nigerian youth think about certain things. The Nigerian words and phrases in the text show the nativity and nationalism of these young university students in Nigeria.

The diction used in the novel also exposes the uneducated and/or less educated class of the Nigerian society. Going by the diction, Toads for Supper is rendered in the typical linguistic habit of undergraduates of Nigerian universities – the tendency to start a conversation in Standard English, from which they jump to using slangs in English, Igbo words and expressions are also frequent in the novel and frequently code-switching into the native language of the environment.

So we can say that his use and selection of diction succeed in delivering his themes and message effectively as well as beautifully.

So the researchers conclude that Ike handles this effectively to enable smooth flow of communication among people of diverse linguistic and educational backgrounds. His stylistic use of language adds to the aesthetic, artistic, literary taste of the novel. It also gives the novel an interesting and fresh air.

Besides, revealing some of the important themes and concepts in the novel, Ike didn't fail to add some humor in his writing. Ike's network of language selection and paragraph construction, generally speaking, makes the texts highly readable, comprehensible and enjoyable.

Ike is indeed a great writer. The future researchers can study his other novels for the research as well not only from linguistic stylistic perspective but also from literary stylistic perspectives. Moreover, his novels are very rich in themes, ideas and concepts, so the future researcher can also apply different linguistic and literary theories for their research which will be a great addition to the African Literature.

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